

ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES

ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES, PROTOTYPE OF ANTICHRIST

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When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Matt. 24:15

But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end. Daniel 12:4, 9.

A few references:

- 1. Antiochus Epiphanes was a Syrian king who came to power about 175 BC. He is one of the Selucids, who in succession to Alexander the Great built a realm in Syrian and adjacent lands. Epiphanes' name means "God made manifest." He sought to force Greek custom on the Jews. In imposing Hellenism, he was but following out the intentions of his predecessor, Alexander the Great, whose dream was to create an empire by culture. This had a measure of success, but there was a core of priests and people who refused to abandon the faith of their forefathers and be Hellenized. By his Hellenism, Epiphanes tried to put an end to the Jewish religious community. The events were the cause of the Maccabean struggle.*
- 2. Antiochus IV, heeding the advise of Hellenized Jews, believed that the majority of the Jewish nation was ready to accept GREEK CULTURE. Antiochus decided to turn the temple at Jerusalem into a Greek temple of Zeus or Dionysus. The strong resistance of the people led to the FIRST KNOWN INSTANCE OF RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN HISTORY: worship of God was forbidden and the Jews were forced to worship other Gods.*
- 3. Antiochus, on his way back to Palestine, sent Apollinius (167 BC) with twenty two thousand soldiers to destroy Jerusalem two years after it's capture by*

himself. Apollinius slew multitudes, dismantled and pillaged the city. They then, from a fortress they had built commanding the temple, fell on and slew the devout Jews worshipping at the temple; so that temple services were discontinued. Antiochus decreed that all should conform to Hellenism. The temple was consecrated to Zeus - Dionysus. Identifying himself with that god, WITH FANATICAL HAUGHTINESS HE SOUGHT TO MAKE WORSHIP OF HIMSELF UNIVERSAL (1 Maccabees 1:41; 2 Maccabees 6:7).

The central event depicted here has ever since been known as the abomination of desolation. These things happened several hundred years before Christ, but we shouldn't view them as musty old relics from history. If that is what it looks like to you, stick with us, we hope to dissuade you of that notion.

Alexander the Great had a grand plan, conquer the world via Greek culture (Hellenism). By subversive means, if that didn't work, by force. Antiochus Epiphanes, his successor, had a most difficult proposition attempting to subvert Jews under his realm in Palestine. It caused an enormous CULTURE WAR... and eventually, unable to subvert devout Jews, tremendous persecution.

By now, you should be seeing the prophetic implications involved here. History is repeating itself. Look around you, THERE IS A CULTURE WAR GOING ON! So far, of a subversive nature, but eventually an Antiochus Epiphanes is going to arrive who will seek to impose his will by force...the "willful" king of Dan. 11:36.

Devout Old Covenant Jews resisted Antiochus, and were the ones he persecuted, however, we live in New Covenant times. The present day culture war, at its core, is anti-Christ and anti-Christian.

With antagonism against people of Christian and holiness convictions growing noticeably every day, with conservative vs liberal polarization growing more noticeable every day, with a general "falling away" or apostasy growing every day, **the Antiochan events are very relevant...** as we hope to bring out in this study. We think you will be amazed at just how relevant they are.

This study is being written in May of 2006. We will be analyzing certain current events of the present day spiritual and political climate: Islamic terrorism, the geo-political alignment of nations, the culture war, and conservative vs liberal polarization. The upshot of which, we believe, will, in the not too distant future, usher in the antichrist and the great tribulation.

The persecutions by Antiochus Epiphanes occasioned the rise of the Maccabees,

they were strong, they knew their God and did exploits. The book of Daniel has much to say about these times. We will explore it's prophetic implications.

Antiochus Epiphanes and the abomination of desolation form no part of the American experience, not so with the Jews in the time of Christ. Hanukkah, or "the feast of Dedication," is based on it, and was very much a part of their experience. Jesus presumably observed the feast of Dedication, John 10:22. Thus, when he uttered these words, "*when you shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place,*" the Apostles were fully cognizant of it's prophetic implications. It would be well for us if we were too.

Things that are first are most significant in the Bible. They set the precedent. They are the prototype, the paradigm. Hence, these Antiochan "firsts," the culture war, the abomination of desolation, and his persecutions - which persecution, as noted above, has **the distinction of being the first religious persecution in history** - are primary historical prototypes of the great tribulation and the endtime. Though there be many lines of prophecy culminating in the endtimes, the Antiochan one takes precedence.

This study is not for everybody, it is for the Daniels out there, for those, like Daniel, who have a "*heart to understand,*" Dan. 10:12. Who desire, as the tribe of Issachar, "*an understanding of the times,*" 1 Chron. 12:32. An understanding of our times, that is. Momentous things are going on already.

This is a very long study. We cover a lot, almost whole chapters. Were we to post every passage cited, it would be prohibitively long. It is assumed, therefore, that you look up the passages we cite yourself. To stay with us on this study, you are going to have to put forth some effort on your part. This is not superficial stuff, the sort of pabulum so many are used to. For those who have very little interest in prophetic matters - sad to say, not many nowadays do - we might as well say up front. Stop. No need for you to go any further, this isn't for you. However, for those who see it otherwise, read on.

We try to leave no stone unturned, yet this study, long as it is, is hardly more than a primer. There are dimensions to the image of the beast and mark of the beast, for instance, that are beyond the scope of this article. No room to fit in a commentary on Dan. 7, and the seventy week prophecy of Dan. 9. This article has ramifications, theological and political, we could not fully address, such as: Godhead issues, Kabbalist and Gnostic theosophy, the Jewish expectation of "two messiahs," and of course, the many political issues involved. We touch on a great

amount of issues, however, always keeping the focus on the main theme, the prophecies of Daniel in relation to the career of the antichrist.

What you see in this study is not recent impulses. Rather it comes from long years of prophetic study. I am no prophecy neophyte. Rather, an old veteran of many "prophecy wars." What you see in this study is the distillation of over 40 years of study on the subject, i.e. the prophetic implications of Antiochus Epiphanes as the premier prototype of antichrist.

For prophecy students, much of what you see in this study you are probably familiar with. However, you will find insights, I dare say, you have not considered before. I claim no infallibility. However, I do believe in a God and his prophetic word which are. And I believe we are nearing the "time of the end," when God inspires with increased knowledge things that have been sealed up in the book of Daniel, Dan. 12:4, 9. In particular, the subject matter at hand.

PROPHETIC PRECEDENTS IN DANIEL

The purpose of this section is to emphasize the tremendous effect Daniel has on the New Testament. Many of its most important precepts were established in Daniel. In the Gospels, for instance we see Jesus conversing often with the Jews about the kingdom. It was obviously a term of common usage among them.

But where did they get such terminology from? From the prophets in general, and Daniel in particular. The kingdom is very prominent in Daniel...plus a lot of other prophetic concepts of common usage among them. Much of which was developed in the period of time between the Old and New Testaments. The apocalyptic writings of this period (the Pseudepigrapha) reveal that their prophetic concepts were based primarily on Daniel. Daniel set the precedent.

Their concept of a coming kingdom was derived largely from a common theme we see in Daniel, that of a Son of Man who was to come with the clouds of heaven, defeat and take over the last earthly kingdom in a succession of kingdoms, or world empires. Not only defeat the last one, but RULE OVER IT AFTER HE DEFEATS IT. It was to be an earthly kingdom, because the Son of man takes their earthly kingdom from them, replacing it by his own kingdom. We see this in Dan. 2, the "metal man" prophecy, and in Dan. 7, a succession of four "beast" kingdoms.

Daniel is the basis for many important prophetic themes in the New Testament, such as:

(Not an exhaustive list, enough to get the idea though, of the great influence Daniel has on the New Testament. "cp" is shorthand for compare.)

1. **Son of man.** Especially, as it relates to his second coming and his subsequent kingdom reign, cp Dan. 7:9, 22; Matt. 10:23, 16:27, 19:28, 24:30, 25:31, 26:64.
2. **The Abomination of Desolation**, cp Dan. 8:13, 9:27, 11:31, 12:11; Matt. 24:15.
3. **The Great Tribulation**, cp Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21, 29.
4. **The post-tribulational coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven**, cp Dan. 7:13, 14; Matt. 16:27, 24:30, 26:64, Acts 1:9-11, 1 Thess. 4:17 (in this verse, it is the same "cloud coming" event, the rapture of the church after the tribulation).
5. **The Resurrection**, cp Dan. 12:2; Acts 24:15 (of the just and unjust, two separate events, see the Revelation references below).
6. **The Kingdom**, cp Dan. 2, 7; in it's specifically futurist, second coming aspect in the NT, the kingdom is too numerous to list, some 48 times, but here are some examples: Matt. 16:28, 25:34, Lk. 13:28, 29, 1 Cor. 15:20, Gal. 5:21, 2 Tim. 4:1.

Daniel is also the basis for many important themes in the book of Revelation...

1. **The word "apocalypse."** In distinction to the other prophetic books, Daniel is considered "apocalyptic," his visions set the precedent for an entire genre of prophetic literature. Apocalyptic being defined as sequential prophecy, prophetic visions featuring a series or sequence of events. Hence, we read, "The Revelation (Apocalypse) of Jesus Christ," both Daniel and Revelation being of apocalyptic nature featuring visions of sequential events.
2. **The Son of man**, 1:13. Who is also the Ancient of Days, the almighty, cp Dan. 7:9, 13, 14, 18, 22, 27; Rev. 1:8, 14. (Oneness revelation of the Godhead, or the mighty God in Christ..)
3. **The "Beast,"** cp Dan. 7; Rev. 13 - 20. Elsewhere known in the NT as the man of sin, or the antichrist.
4. **The Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven**, cp Dan. 7:13,14; Rev. 1:7, 14:14.
5. **The Resurrection of "some to everlasting life, the "just," or the saved**, cp Dan. 12:2; Rev. 20:4,5 (those raised to reign with Christ during the 1000 years), Acts 24:15.
6. **The Resurrection of "some to everlasting contempt," the "unjust," or**

the unsaved, cp Dan. 12:2; Rev. 20:5 (the rest of the dead resurrected after the 1000 years), Acts 24:15.

7. **The kingdom**, cp Dan. 2:44, 7:13, 14, 18, 22, 27; Rev. 11:15 (the taking over of the kingdoms of this world). 20:4-6 (the resurrected saints to reign with Christ a thousand years).

8. **The judgment of the saints at the inauguration of the kingdom**, cp Dan. 7:22; Rev. 20:4 ("*and judgment was given unto them*").

[In the above, note how important doctrines such as the Mighty God in Christ, and the pre-millennial, post-trib rapture of the church come to light when Daniel is compared to the NT.]

ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES

We should carefully scrutinize this man. What we know of him comes from historical sources. Except for the prophecies in Daniel, you won't find him in the OT. His career took place in the inter-testament period. By the time we get into the NT, however, he has become a tremendously important historical figure. So much so, he forms the backdrop to Jesus' words in the Olivet Discourse. The prophecies of Matt. 24, 2 Thess. 2, and many parts of Revelation are largely based on him and his career.

His career takes up a lot of space in Daniel. As the primary forerunner of Antichrist, Antiochus Epiphanes is hugely important. **This is why so much space is given in Daniel describing the career of one evil man - because he prefigures the ultimate evil man.**

To get the full picture of this evil man, we will be gaining all we can learn about him in chapters 8 and 11, especially chapter 11. Daniel is our primary Biblical source of reference in this study.

Before we do, a preliminary point concerning Daniel and the book of Revelation. The book of Revelation is not an identical rubber stamp, a straight through duplicate of what we see in Daniel - a common mistake made by Dispensationalists. Revelation is progressive. Daniel, and all OT prophecy, must be interpreted by the superior light of NT revelation. The NT often modifies the basic imagery we see in the OT prophets.

We see this in the book of Revelation. The four horsemen of Rev. 6, for instance, are not identical to what we see in its original Zech. 6:1-8 form, it has been greatly modified. The beast with seven heads and ten horns of Rev. 13 is not identical to

what we see in Dan. 7, it has been radically modified, brought up to date, and made to fit the geo-political context of the endtime.

Another for instance, the template we see in Dan. 11, of Antiochus making military excursions into the Ptolomaic kingdom of Egypt, the king of the south, as we shall see later in this study, is not identical either, but is only a rough template, a rough approximation. We intend to bring the geo-political situation that existed in Daniel's day up to date to fit our present day geo-political alignment of nations.

Same with current events, in this study we intend to bring the prophecies of Daniel up to date to fit the conditions of the world today. Such as the Antiochan culture war, and the present day religious and political polarization between conservatives and the liberal left. More on this later.

ANTIOCHUS NEAR AND FAR IN DANIEL CHAPTER EIGHT

Our commentary here is only on the verses, and parts of which, that are pertinent to our subject. However, we encourage looking up the passages and reading them for yourself in full. The scripture is in italics.

The angel interprets for Daniel the events leading up to "the little horn," cp verses 1-9 and 20-22. Events in Daniel's near future, which events we know were fulfilled to a tee: the Greek King, Alexander the Great, defeated the Medo-Persian Empire; upon his death, his empire was partitioned into four segments, "out of one of them," the Selucid Empire, arose King Antiochus, the little horn.

From Daniel's perspective, the "little horn," King Antiochus, lay in the near future, however, as indicated by our commentary below, we believe the prophetic "near-far phenomena" projects him much further into the future. As such, Antiochus was the "near," projecting a "far" fulfillment. Forerunner of Antichrist, in other words. Dan. 8

9 ...came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.

From Antiochus' point of geographical reference in Syria, Palestine was southeast. Antichrist's career and rise to prominence is also going to be related to Palestine.

10 And it waxed great even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host, and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.

In the precursory event, Antiochus said many blasphemous things against the

Jew's forefathers. As to the endtime Antiochus,

*"he openeth his mouth in **blasphemy** against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, AND THEM THAT DWELL IN HEAVEN,"* Rev. 13:6.

11, 12 ...and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression.

These were events connected with Antiochus' "transgression" at the temple in Jerusalem. As precursory events, it points to reestablished temple religion by unbelieving Jews under the Old Covenant. Which covenant is no longer valid, we are now *"sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all...he offered one sacrifice for sins forever,"* Heb. 10:7-12. The only valid sacrifice and covenant in effect today is Christ and the New Covenant, but this does not rule out the fact that Jews in their Old Covenant unbelief will fulfill the Antiochan prophecies.

12 ...and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced and prospered.

By attacking temple worship, Antiochus did, indeed, cast down the system of Old Covenant truth "to the ground." In the endtime, however, the antichrist will have superior New Covenant truth to cast down, of which, the OT temple worship was but it's mere shadow. His policy will prosper (see commentary below on v. 24, 25)

13, 14

As to the time element in these verses, it has reference to Antiochus' abomination of transgression (desolation) when the evening and morning sacrifices were stopped, (see also v. 25). Antiochus' persecutions continued for 3 ½ years, which is also the time span of the endtime great tribulation.

19 And he said, behold, I will make thee to know what shall be in the last end of THE INDIGNATION...

Antiochus' blasphemous acts were, indeed, to the Jews a colossal indignation. But the angel points to an indignation beyond Antiochus. A *"last end and indignation"* of much larger scope and intensity. Which indignation, or apostasy, we see in 2 Thess. 2:3.

23 And in the latter time of their kingdom ...

Four Grecian provinces resolved into two, more fully developed in chapter 11 as the king of the north and south. Latter time, indeed. With these words, the geopolitical situation of Antiochus' day is projected all the way to the "latter time," the endtime.

When the transgressors are come to the full

23 ...when the transgressors are come to the full...

This has reference to Jewish transgression, apostate Jews transgressed in Antiochus' day. But by no means was it the fullness of it. Nor even in their transgression at the "cutting off" of Jesus Messiah (Dan. 9:26a), nor in AD 70, had it reached its fullness, rather it has grown exponentially. The apostasy, or falling away, of 2 Thess. 2 is the fullness of it. The antichrist will be the man of sin, THE man of transgression, the man of lawlessness.

23 ...when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance...shall stand up

The military charisma of Antiochus was fierce, so his persecutions. The fullness of the endtime falling away will manifest the antichrist's fierceness. As with Antiochus, his fierceness will first be manifested militarily, then, in his persecutions – the great tribulation.

23 when the transgressors are come to the full, a king...UNDERSTANDING DARK SENTENCES shall stand up.

This verse is the major tie in with the occult. Antiochus was an adept of the pagan mysteries, especially the Dionysian (more on this later). The antichrist will be adept in all forms of occultism, witchcraft, Freemasonry, New Age, especially Kabbalism and Gnosticism, "*principalities, powers, rulers of the **darkness** of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places,*" Eph.6:12b. Which esoteric, humanistic theosophy gives rise to the deification of man. By this time in the antichrist's career, his deification will have become the fullness of the falling away, 2 Thess. 2:3,4. Theosophic "dark sentences" are the inspiration behind antichrist's exaltation of himself as God.

24 and his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power

By the devil's power, Rev. 13:2b. When satanic lying wonders will be openly manifested, 2 Thess. 2:9, Rev. 13:13-15.

24 and he shall destroy wonderfully

Shock and awe. The world will marvel, or be astounded by the military success of this man, when he goes forth as the white horse rider conquering his foes, they will say, *"Who is like unto the beast, who is able to make war with him?"* Rev. 13:4b.

24, 25 and he shall prosper, and practice...and though his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand

What craft is this? Probably indicative of his economic socialist policy (craft). As Hitler's socialist economic policy - Nazi is an acronym for National SOCIALIST German Workers Party - arrived on the scene when the world was in severe economic depression causing Germany to prosper, so the antichrist. We believe history will repeat itself on this. Severe economic depression will occasion the rise of the antichrist. The economic policies of the antichrist will also be socialist. Ultimately to be manifested in the economics of the mark of the beast (buying and selling), Rev. 13:16, 17.

24 and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people

Antiochus persecuted the Jews who opposed him, the mighty and holy of that time, but in the endtimes, persecution of the Christian elect, Holiness people, is indicated - in Palestine and elsewhere.

25 ...and by peace shall destroy many...

The antichrist will be a man of the anti-war left, a man of UN globalist "peace." Ultimately, the mark of the beast will be presented as the solution to the world's economic distress, but will be the means of their eternal spiritual destruction, Rev. 14:9, 10.

25 and he shall magnify himself in his heart

cp 8:11, 11:36, 2 Thess. 2:4.

25 he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

Which the antichrist does at Armageddon, Rev. 19:19, but is destroyed. Thus, his NT title, the son of "perdition," 2 Thess. 2:3.

DANIEL ELEVEN PRELIMINARIES

Daniel chapters 10 - 12, all must agree, cover a very large scope. The angel in v. 10:2-4, gives a step by step description from Daniel's time of the Persian empire, followed by the Greek empire of Alexander the Great and the breakup of his empire, resolving into the two main players, the king of the north and king of the south, with Palestine in the middle. It continues on as a running historical account of events from Daniel's day all the way to the endtime great tribulation and the resurrection in 12:1,2, cp Matt. 24:21.

These are events in relation to the Jewish people. Daniel, knowing only the Old Covenant, his concern would, naturally, be in relation to it. He knew nothing of NT theology. We should interpret Daniel 11 with that in mind. Yet, we of the NT revelation, having insight that he did not have, must also interpret him in the light of the new, especially the prophetic sections of the NT: Matt. 24, the prophetic passages in the epistles, and the book of Revelation.

Chapter 11 is in a very difficult, cryptic style, which has baffled people for centuries. According to 12:4, 9, not to be rightly understood until OUR time, the time of the end.

Daniel 11's scope stretches all the way to the endtime tribulation and resurrection. **Yet it's main focus is none other than King Antiochus.** The angel takes Daniel forward to Antiochus' time, taking up most of the prophecy, and then, while describing his career, it very cryptically leaps forward all the way to the time of the end, v. 11:36-12:2.

What is this but the near-far prophetic phenomena so common in prophecy? Jesus did the same thing in the Olivet Discourse...which has stumbled some (Preterists).

What we have is the angel trying to show us that the career of Antiochus is being projected into the future as the template for the time of the end. The time of the end, not the final end point, though it is included, but the TIME of the end. An important distinction. In terms of Revelation, the time of the end beginning with the opening of the seals.

Chapter 11 is history in detail, mostly on Antiochus' career. Yet, according to the angel in 10:14, we should read it prophetically. The angel says as much, he tells Daniel that the revelation he was about to receive pertained to **the latter days** (10:14).

Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.

“Latter” from Daniel’s perspective, in two dimensions: the near future (a mere few hundred years in the future to Antiochus), and the far distant future (approx. 2500 years in the future so far).

Here is the important key. Antiochus is the precursory antichrist in v. 21-35 of chapter 11. The antichrist, a sort of “endtime Antiochus,” begins to be described in v. 36, his career continues through v. 45.

The abomination of desolation took place under Antiochus, detailed in the precursory section, 21-35, yet in Matt. 24:15 Jesus projects THIS section into the future (Antiochus and the abomination of desolation happened nearly two hundred years prior). It is chapter eleven of Daniel that Jesus is quoting from in Matt. 24:15. We are to understand the progression of events in Dan. 11:21-35 as foreshadowings of endtime events.

Mt 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

The events of the next section, Dan. 11:36-45, though, are not precursory, but are described in much more precise language. The use of “the time of the end” in v. 27 & 35, pointing the precursory section to the actual time of the end beginning in v. 36, highlights the distinction between these two sections. It illustrates “near-far” prophetic phenomena. The precursory section, the “near” events, the endtime section, the “far” events (see the commentary on v. 27 and 35 in the next section).

Another prophetic principle we see oftentimes in prophecy is recapitulation, that is, after a series of events there comes a stepping back, giving us additional detail the former did not give us. Evident in the seals, trumpets, and vials of Revelation, for instance. We see it in Daniel 11. The first section takes us to the abomination of desolation and Antiochus’ persecution of faithful Jews, it sort of trails off while describing the activities of the Maccabees and the devout Jews during Antiochus’ persecutions, v. 32-35, and then, quite abruptly, in v. 36 there comes a stepping back.

The character of Antiochus has already been described in great detail, yet the last section beginning in v. 36 steps back and describes it AGAIN. **This time, however, it is describing the ENDTIME King Antiochus, the antichrist.** Hence, in the last section, we have a sort of stepping back and telescoping forward

at the same time. The stepping back to let us know that the antichrist is based on the Antiochus paradigm. The historical King Antiochus is the paradigm, yet there are many differences between the historical Antiochus and the king of the last section...which indicates we should interpret the last section as prophetic of the endtime antichrist.

These three things: the early career of Antiochus in Dan. 11, the beginning of sorrows (birth pains) in Matt. 24:4-8, and the first four seals of Revelation conflate. That is, Antiochus' early career parallels the beginning of sorrows and the first four seals. Which, conflated together, depict the antichrist's early career BEFORE his true character and intentions are revealed.

DANIEL ELEVEN COMMENTARY

The rise of King Antiochus (IV) Epiphanes.

21 *...shall stand up a vile person...*

21 *...he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.*

Deception, cunning, and treachery were Antiochus' trademark. And, so, the antichrist. He makes political false promises of peace to win over the anti-war masses (he comes in peaceably). His goal – political power by what ever means it takes to get it. He won't appear militaristic to start with, that comes later.

Antiochus' military ventures

22

In this verse, he is depicted as a shrewd politician, he gains control of the masses. **He comes on the scene conquering.** Antiochus overwhelmed his nephew in Egypt, Ptolomy Philometer, the king of the south, whom he was in political alliance with ("the prince of the covenant" in this verse), with his large military, and broke his power. He comes on the scene conquering, foreshadowing the white horse rider of Rev.

23 *he shall work deceitfully*

Lying, deceit, and treachery were Antiochus' trademark, He doublecrossed the king of the south. The antichrist will be a lying politician and a double-crosser of the first magnitude.

Using peace and security deception, Antiochus schemes how to defeat the strong opposition of the king of the south. In terms of today, Islam. Taking the “spoil” - in terms of today, oil, the life blood of the world economies. A major motivation behind the antichrist’s military ventures.

25, 26

These verses detail Antiochus’ first military campaign against the king of the south. In terms of the endtime, the white horse rider rides forth to conquer militarily when the antichrist makes his military debut... more on this in our section, “The White Horse Rider of the First Seal.”

27 [Antiochus utilizes lying diplomacy on the Egyptians, the king of the south - so the antichrist, more on this in our section, "The Endtime Geo-political Alignment of nations] *...for the end shall be at the time appointed*

In terms of the “near-far” principle, Antiochus’ dealings here with the king of the south is the “near” event, it is not the “end,” it is yet appointed. This points us to the “far” section beginning in v. 36, the time of the end, during which the antichrist fights the king of the south, v. 40.

Antiochus’ persecutions and the Abomination of Desolation:

28 *his heart shall be against the holy covenant*

As Antiochus secretly devised the destruction of the Old Covenant, intending to replace it with pagan Hellenistic, hedonistic culture and religion, so the antichrist. *His heart shall be against the covenant*, in the precursory event, the Old Covenant, however, the man of sin “*opposeth and exalteth himself above ALL that is called God, or that is worshipped,*” 2 Thess. 2:4. He will be against ALL Biblical, conservative, morality-based religion, whether among Christians, or even among a remnant of Jews towards the end of the tribulation.

29 *[another military campaign against the king of the south]*

30 *he shall be grieved, and return, AND HAVE INDIGNATION AGAINST THE HOLY COVENANT...and have intelligence with them that forsake the covenant.*

While in Egypt, the influence of Rome caused Antiochus, to back down. Enraged, he withdrew, turning his full attention on Jews who kept the Old Covenant. He had

“intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.” In collaboration with Jewish apostates, in other words.

31 *And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and THEY SHALL PLACE THE ABOMINATION THAT MAKETH DESOLATE.*

This is the main source passage for the abomination of desolation, Matt. 24, 2 Thess. 2. Antiochus sent Apollinius with 22,000 soldiers (arms shall stand on his part). Jerusalem was pillaged, the abomination was placed in the temple, thereby polluted or made desolate.

32 *And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries*

Antiochus in collaboration with apostates who *“do wickedly against the covenant”* carry out his designs, enticing the faithful. The same will happen with the antichrist and apostates in collaboration with him.

32 *But the people who do know their God shall be strong and do exploits*

Faithful devout Jews, Maccabean freedom fighters, did great exploits. As per the endtime, this is when the 2 witnesses will do their “exploits,” with the rest of the “strong” who know their God elsewhere in the world doing likewise.

33 *And they that understand among the people shall instruct many*

The faithful, during Antiochus’ culture war and persecutions, instructed others. As the faithful will do in the endtime preaching the gospel of the kingdom. “Instruct many,” indeed, an innumerable multitude, Rev. 7:9,14. The crying need of the hour, preachers that understand the oneness of the Godhead, the mighty God in Christ – *“they that do know their God,”* v. 32 - and endtime prophecy. With their understanding opened BEFORE the tribulation, so they will be able to instruct others during it.

33 *yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days*

Amidst massive martyrdom, the devout Jews persevered. The same will happen during the great tribulation. Great endtime revival in the midst of tremendous deception and persecution. Of these times, Jesus said, *“But he that shall endure until the end, the same shall be saved,”* Matt. 24:13.

34 *Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries.*

Severe persecution of the elect with enticements to forsake their faith: strong delusion with no apparent relief from it. The antichrist's main enticement: the mark of the beast: why suffer, why starve, just take the mark and you can buy or sell. Other translations of this verse:

"While all these persecutions are going on, a little help will arrive, though many who join them will not be sincere."

"Now when they fall they will be granted a little help, and many will join with them in hypocrisy."

35 *And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.*

The trying times of Antiochus' persecutions were but precursory of the endtimes, in other words. Near-far prophecy is depicted here. "*To make them white:*" robes will be made white in the time of the end. A prime reason that the church must be present in the tribulation. The everlasting gospel preached in order that "robes" be made "white in the blood of the Lamb," Rev. 7:14.

THE ANTICHRIST'S CHARACTER

In v. 35, the historical time line of events sort of trails off, then, beginning with the next verse, we have a dramatic change. We make a quantum leap all the way to **the time of the end**. Like a painter painting a masterpiece he paints a picture of the historical Antiochus, and then dips his brush into some colors we haven't seen before, and paints for us a composite picture of someone based on the Antiochus of the last section, yet in many ways very different.

This section is itself divided into two distinct parts. The first, beginning with verse 36, deals with the character of antichrist, the last, beginning with verse 40, geopolitical events during his rule.

36 *And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.*

37 *Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor*

regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.

With these verses, we telescope from King Antiochus, a willful king imposing his will on the Jews, to the endtime willful king imposing his will, not only on Jews, but the entire world. Paul knew perfectly well who and what these verses were prophetic of, the endtime abomination of desolation – as Antiochus “sat” in the temple via the statue of Zeus-Dionysus, representative of himself, so the antichrist and his image, the image of the beast. Paul draws from verses 36, 37 in 2 Thess. 2.

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

Compare Paul’s words, “*Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God*” to Dan. 11:37, he shall “*not regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.*” Clearly, Paul was drawing from Daniel 11.

Isa. 14:13 depicts the same thing, satanic prideful ambition to “*sit upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north.*” An OT idiom for the temple on Mt. Zion, see Psalms 48:2. Conflating Dan. 11:36 and Isa. 14:13, we get a composite picture of the man of sin, full of satanic pride, exalting himself above all that is called God, sitting in the temple of God (the temple on Mt. Zion, the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north).

For the phrase in v. 36, he “*shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods,*” compare this to the blasphemies of the antichrist in Rev. 13.

5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

V. 36, he “*shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.*” Great apostasy (indignation) under it’s leader, the antichrist. To fulfill prophecy, it must happen - it is **predetermined** by God to “prosper” until the 3 1/2 years of tribulation are accomplished.

V. 37, “*Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers.*” Antiochus’ “fathers,” or his

ancestors, were Greeks, and their gods were the pagan gods of the Greek pantheon. Antiochus was Greek, however, antichrist will be of both Gentile and Jewish descent. "Christ" means "Messiah." Thus the term, "anti-Christ," has a specifically Jewish connotation. He, therefore, must be a Jewish counterfeit Messiah. Jews expect their promised Messiah to be of Jewish descent, if he is not, they will not accept him as Messiah (John 5:43). "*God of his fathers*," is an idiom of the Jews.

Thus we deduce that the term "*neither shall he regard the God of his fathers*" has a special endtime-prophetic, Jewish meaning. "His fathers" are Jewish "fathers," the false Messiah will not "regard" the distinctly monotheistic God of the Old Testament, "the holy one of Israel," 2 Kings 19:22, Psalms 71:22, Isa. 1:4, 12:6, 30:12, 43:3 (the term is used 19 times total in Isaiah), Jer. 51:5.

Antiochus "regarded" Zeus. Obviously so, the statue he placed in the temple was a statue of Zeus. Antiochus regarded the "God of his fathers," but the endtime "Antiochus," will not. More on this distinction later.

But, first, let's deal with this statue. The statue represented more than just Zeus, it was a composite deity representing two of Antiochus' favorite gods, Zeus and DIONYSUS. Two in one, if you please. Dionysus is a clue to the next term, and a very enigmatic one, "*the desire of women*." But first, let's deal with Dionysus.

DIONYSUS

Most have heard of Zeus, not so with "Dionysus." The Greek "Dionysus" is identical to the Babylonian "Tammuz," the Egyptian "Osiris," and the Roman "Bacchus." As the name of the Babylonian mother goddess, "Ishtar," had many aliases scattered throughout the ancient world, Ashtoreth, Isis, Aphrodite, Diana, Venus, etc., so Tammuz. In ancient "mother and child" worship, Dionysus was one of its variations.

The Greek and Roman variation was particularly licentious. Nothing compares to the gross immorality and debauchery of Greek-Roman Bacchanalian worship. Dionysus was the god of drunkenness, fertility, orgiastic madness, and the focus of various "mystery" religions. His worship involved transvestism and the blurring of male female roles. He was the god of the theater. Dionysus worship was a rebellion against all normality, considered an extremely subversive influence, capable of undermining, or if not restrained, overturning the established order of society. Nothing was as subversive or lawless.

Dionysus was depicted in iconography with a wine glass in his hand, and with effeminate long hair. His was a different kind of masculinity (equivalent to the modern “metrosexual” male). He was the god of homosexuality. Of Dionysus’ followers, women were predominant. In fact, ancient society viewed Dionysus as the god of women, or feminism. Here is what one Roman historian said about Dionysus worship:

“No sort of crime, no kind of immorality, was left unattempted. There were more obscenities practiced between men than between men and women. Anyone refusing to submit was slaughtered as a sacrificial victim. To regard nothing as forbidden was among these people the summit of religious achievement.” Titus Livy, History of Rome, Book 39.13

We see today the push for collectivist socialism, the enemy of individualist freedom, and New Age “channeling” (in reality, demon possession), In the following quote, we see it’s earliest manifestations:

“Another of Dionysus’ attributes, loss of identity. The actors in the theater symbolized the submersion of their identity into that of another. Dionysus made a habit of stealing the identities of his worshippers; the bacchantes dancing on the mountainside have no separate personalities; they are mad, crazed, they have been taken over by the god; and they are all alike. The individual is sublimated by the mob. Dionysus induces mass hysteria, he is the god of mob fury. This loss of individuality is demonstrated in the theater not only by the masks which the actors wear, but also by the chorus. They dance and sing in unison, all chanting the same words. The members of the chorus have no identity, each is merely an insignificant part of the whole, with no separate will. All individuality and will power must be given up to Dionysus, when the god chooses to take it.”

Dionysus’ followers, as well as another god, Pan, have had the most influence on the modern view of Satan as animal-like and with horns. The wearing of horns was part of Dionysus worship.

If we want to understand this man, Antiochus, then understand this section. He worshipped Dionysus, THIS IS THE CULTURE he was trying to force on the Jews. Do we not see what was behind the tremendous clash of culture? With these things as the prophetic projection of today, do we not see all of the above going on today, howbeit in a different guise? But there is more. In the following quotation, we gain even more insight to the character of Antiochus:

“Dionysus was a strange, enigmatic, mysterious deity. A god of sudden metamorphoses and unexpected EPIPHANIES. He was often seen as the “GOD OF EPIPHANY,” the god who appears, suddenly and dramatically and bodily, not only to his followers but also to those misfortunate enough to oppose him.”

Antiochus thought of himself as the personification of his god Dionysus. Acting out an enigmatic and mysterious role. He saw himself as the metamorphoses and epiphany of Dionysus. They thought him dead back in Jerusalem, but he made his “epiphany,” he appeared suddenly and dramatically, apparently risen from the dead, *“to his followers but also to those misfortunate to oppose him.”* Previews of the antichrist.

With Dionysus, the god of epiphany, being his god, it is no wonder that he took the name Antiochus “Epiphanes.” He thought of himself as the embodiment of everything represented in Dionysus. The statue of Zeus-Dionysus he erected in the temple represented himself as the embodiment of this system of worship. The statue was the symbol of it. In Greek mystic imagery, the statue was representative of Antiochus himself. Behold the man of SIN.

Certain features have been noted about Dionysus, such as he was supposedly killed but then revived, which has caused many modern day neo-pagan, occultic groups, believers of the “ancient mysteries,” to claim that Christianity is based on Dionysus worship. (Groups such as Freemasonry, New Age, and witchcraft groups.) We won’t waste time refuting such nonsense, except to say that the similarities they find have nothing to do with Jesus Christ, but are previews of the antichrist. Dionysus worship was satanic to the core.

THE DESIRE OF WOMEN

37 Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women

In Antiochus Epiphanes’ belief system, he “regarded” Zeus-Dionysus. Zeus represented the former (God of his fathers), Dionysus the latter (the desire of women). Dionysus was the “god of women,” his chief followers were hordes of crazed, half naked, drunken and demon possessed women. No Greek god fits the “desire of women” description so poignantly as Dionysus.

But to fully exegete this, we have to factor more into this than just Antiochus’ beliefs. As we have pointed out, the antichrist will have to be Jewish. As such, “the God of his fathers” has to have also a Jewish meaning. And, not only so, but “the desire of women” also.

One view is that this means the antichrist will be a homosexual. This he may very well be considering the tie-in with Bacchanalian homosexual immorality. Considering the homosexual trend of today, the sissy “metrosexual” effeminate men of today. But, looking at this phrase within the context of Jewish beliefs, it speaks of deity.

In *“God of our fathers,”* we saw it having a Jewish meaning. *“The desire of women”* presumably would have been understood by Daniel as referring to a prophecy well known to Jews, the seed of the woman prophecy of Gen. 3:15. Messiah was to be born of a woman. Jewish women desired (the desire of women) to be the one to have the honor of giving birth to the Messiah.

The name Antiochus took to himself, **“Epiphanes,”** means “God made manifest.” Clearly then, “the desire of women” might be taken as prophetic-speak for Messiah, born of a woman, who is “God made manifest.” This is what Jesus is, God manifest in the flesh. The false Messiah, like Antiochus Epiphanes before him, will make this blasphemous claim, “God made manifest,” for himself.

The root of the Greek word “Epiphanes” is “epiphany,” meaning the arrival, or coming of a king. Which is what Jesus’ first coming was. He came preaching “the kingdom of heaven was at hand,” Matt. 4:17, i.e. the gospel of the kingdom, Matt. 24:14. The king had arrived. The endtime Antiochus is the antithesis of this. He will claim that Jesus was not the true Messiah-King, he is. Jesus’ kingdom is not the true kingdom, the one he will preside over is. Jesus is not the true “seed of the woman,” he is. Jesus was not the true “God made manifest,” he is. The “epiphany” of Jesus at his first coming was false, his is the true “epiphany.” Important key words here.

As the counterfeit “desire of women,” or Messiah, in order to deceive the Jews, he will have to be born of a Jewish mother. Yet, according to Rev. 13, he rises from the sea, symbolic of the Gentiles. The “sea” in Dan. 7 refers to the Gentiles, and has always been understood so by Jewish interpreters. Hence, our sense on this, is the “Gentile” beast of Revelation will have a Gentile father and a Gentile name. To the Gentile world, ostensibly a Gentile. But to Jews, having a Jewish mother makes one a Jew according to Jewish reckoning, even if his father is not Jewish. This treacherous individual will be all things to all men. Jews, Gentiles, Christians, Muslims, pagans, Hindus, etc. And will play it to the max.

Thus, we might paraphrase, *“Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all,”*

as:

"Neither shall he regard Jewish monotheism (the God of his fathers), nor Christian Monotheism/Messianism (God manifest in the flesh), nor any god: for he shall magnify himself about all."

He uses a false form of Monotheism and Messianism in order to deceive both Jews and Christians, but his inspiration comes from neither.

His claims to deity derive from Kabbalah, superior to both monotheisms, Kabbalists claim. Alien to both, since neither Jewish Monotheism, nor Christian Monotheism are pantheistic, nor humanist. Since, at its base, Kabbalah is pantheistic humanism, his claims to deity will be readily accepted by the eastern religions, Freemasonry, etc., who hold in common the same basic pantheism.

The pagan (Zeus-Dionysus) and Jewish interpretations of "*God of our fathers*," and "*the desire of women*" we have outlined here, may seem totally contradictory. Only one could be right. Not if one understands Kabbalah. Though Jewish, it holds in common the same pagan concepts and mysticism. The antichrist will probably be a conflation of all of the above. Kabbalah is an important key.

VERSES 38 AND 39

38. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things.

39 Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.

The God of forces? a god whom his fathers knew not? We understand this to refer to the "dark side" of the antichrist's system of belief, his occultism and Kabbalism (we refer you back to the "dark sentences" commentary on Dan. 8: 23 in the section on Dan. 8). The "force be with you," a theme from the Star Wars movie series, illustrates the pantheistic "God of forces."

A strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many. Antiochus enforced his rule by building shrines all over Palestine to Zeus-Dionysus. The endtime beast will force his rule over many, the entire world, by replicating the image of himself, the image of the beast, "*he*

shall cause THEM (many duplicates of the image of the beast) *to rule over many.*" "Them" might also be taken as the composite, "two in one," Zeus-Dionysus. Which idolatry will be honored *"with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things."* The pantheistic, polytheistic, humanistic "god" of the Kabbalah, once openly revealed, will be *"a strange god"* indeed. Antichrist will believe in a Kabbalist "god" whom his fathers knew not.

He *"shall divide the land for gain."* Antiochus did this in miniature (Palestine), the antichrist, on a grand scale. The endtime beast's kingdom is a ten horn kingdom. Not just Palestine, but the world divided and ruled by the antichrist's ten underlings.

THE ENDTIME GEO-POLITICAL ALIGNMENT OF NATIONS

40 And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.

In v. 36-39, we had the picture drawn for us of this man's character during the time of the end, the great tribulation, and now, beginning with this verse, we have geo-political events sketched for us - **during the same time of the end**, v. 40-45.

There are many different ideas about the geo-political peoples mentioned here. Some interpret the two directions north and south as an exact endtime duplicate of the Syrian and Egyptian kingdoms in the times of Antiochus. We disagree. In the "near" section of Dan. 11, Antiochus is THE king of the north, but in the "far" section he is not. In v. 40 he is set in clear contradistinction to both the kings of the north and south.

A prophetic key to understanding this is related to what we see in Revelation. In Revelation, OT prophecy is brought up to date, and even modified. Since this section of Daniel deals with the same time frame that Revelation does, we do likewise.

We factor in events that have happened in the interim since the days of Antiochus. The Greek Syrian kingdom of Antiochus, the king of the north, was defeated and absorbed into the ROMAN EMPIRE. Rome defeated the Greek empire in the succession of beasts in Dan. 7.

Without getting too technical, here is what we are getting at. The "king of fierce

countenance" of Dan. 8, the "little horn" of Dan. 7, the "willful king" of Dan. 11, the "man of sin" of 2 Thess. 2, and the beast of Revelation, the antichrist, are prophetic of the same individual. The Greek element in these prophecies morphs into Rome. And, as Rome was the geo-political power of the west in Dan. 11, which conquered and absorbed the Greek empire, **it is the direction, west, not north, that is indicated in the willful king of the time of the end in v. 40.**

If we understand the antichrist to be of the "west" in our present day alignment of nations, then what about the other three directions of the compass? The historical context of Dan. 11 had the kings of the north and south with Jerusalem in the middle. We see the main geo-political alignment today aligned north, south, west, and east, with Jerusalem as the central reference point.

The old Greek Ptolemaic kingdom of Egypt, the king of the south in Daniel, is long gone. Egypt today is Muslim, thus we see the king of the South as geopolitically representative of the Arab community of the middle east and Africa.

Geographically south in this prophecy, however, as representative of Islam, we see it as representative of all Islamic nations.

The old Greek Selucid kingdom of Syria, the king of the north, of course, is long gone. What we have today is Russia, and those in alignment with her, to the north of Jerusalem.

The power to the west in Antiochus' time was Rome. Easily represented by what is called today simply "the West." Inclusive of Europe, North and South America, and other nations aligned with the West such as Australia. Which have in common such western, "Roman" underpinnings as Roman law and the Roman Catholic Church.

Which leaves only the east. Nations, no doubt, with China as it's geopolitical center of gravity.

We might add that during Antiochus' career, though a Syrian King, he was subservient to, and a vassal of Rome. Projecting this, we see the antichrist arising in that capacity, subservient to certain long established secret conspiratorial powers ensconced in the west (Illuminati, Freemasonry, Bnai Brith, the CFR, and the UN. Note, the UN headquarters is in the "west," New York).

In view of the considerations we have outlined, we see the antichrist arising in a western nation. The democratic process of the west being well suited to this political "animal." Aptly called the "beast" in Rev. We, therefore, deduce that the antichrist will arise out of the western geo-political alignment of nations. As it

stands now, the U. S. A. stands as the military power of the west, second to none in the world. Well suited to the militaristic aims of what these prophecies predict. Unless the U. S. A. were to give place to some other western nation having greater military power, say some European nation, it looks entirely probable that the liberal left of the US will someday elect the one who will fulfill these prophecies. Liberal left, you say? Read on...

THE CONSERVATIVE - LIBERAL POLARIZATION

Sorry, we hate to offend, but we have to get a little political here. Nations, their type of government and politics, have a lot to do with prophecy. The endtime beast and his government, for instance, are quite political.

As to myself, I am a "Christo-cratic," political labels mean nothing to me. The Christian and conservative principles of candidates, if they have any, determines who I vote for. People speak of the conservative "right" and the liberal "left." The way we see it, the "right" is the path to take. It has a good connotation in the Bible, Matt. 25:34, for instance. "Conservative - Liberal polarization," just what do we mean by "conservative"...or "liberal?" Someone gave a short, simple definition:

"Conservatives have principles, believe in a Creator, and the rule of law. When in doubt on an issue, they check both the Bible and the Constitution, which they use as a constant reference in a changing world. They believe in the concept of truth. Liberals... have no such standard of reference."

The rule of law and the Constitution is mentioned. Does this have anything to do with prophecy? Or with the apostasy and culture war we have been talking about? You bet. It forms the backdrop to 2 Thess. 2:3-8, the apostate liberal left side of the culture war coming under the general heading, "the mystery of iniquity:"

*7 For **the mystery of iniquity** doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.*

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

"Iniquity," in v. 7, is the Greek "anomia," meaning "lawlessness." Already at work...and will culminate in "that wicked." Will culminate in the revelation of the endtime Antiochus, in other words.

*"He who now **letteth**" (restrains), restrains, or resists, the rising tide of apostate*

lawlessness. We refer back to the historical precedent. Who was the leader figure blocking the way of Antiochus' agenda? The leader of the opposition, restraining and resisting his apostate schemes was Onias the high priest. As high priest, he was representative of all devout Jews.

As to "taken out of the way," the Greek is *ek mesou genesthai*, literally "arises out of the midst." Which is what happened in the original precedent. Out of the midst of the apostasy arose Menelaus, the high priest, in collaboration with Antiochus. When he took Onias' place, it became the key event which caused Antiochus to believe he had finally gained the upper hand over his opponents, the conservatives, in the culture war. With Menelaus in place, the abomination of desolation followed soon thereafter.

Antiochus the king and Menelaus the high priest. We see the same parallel in the endtime. Not many are aware of this, but Jews expect TWO Messiahs, a *political* king, and a *religious* high priest. This is precisely what we have in the two beasts of Rev. 13.

The key event is the 2nd beast who arises from the "earth" - per 2 Thess. 2:3-8, arising from the midst of the apostasy. **He is the endtime "Menelaus."** It is not until the first beast has his collaborator, his front man, and believes he has majority opinion over the Christian conservatives in the culture war, believing he has deposed his chief obstacle (Jesus, high priest), the restrainer, that worship of the image of the beast and the endtime abomination of desolation, can begin. Jesus, he who restrains, is representative of all restrainers, resisters, and opponents of antichrist subversion.

We offer a paraphrase of 2 Thess. 2:7,8: "The mystery of lawlessness is at work in the culture war: Only he who now restrains (Jesus, high priest, and true Christians everywhere) will restrain until Jesus, high priest, and the beliefs of his true followers are believed to be deposed, then out of the midst of apostate lawlessness arises it's leader, the antichrist high priest. And then shall that wicked one be revealed, the kingly messiah, in collaboration with the antichrist high priest, revealed in self-exaltation in the temple at Jerusalem, causing an image of himself to be worshipped, the image of the beast, the abomination of desolation."

In view of all this, need we say how vital it is, which side of this culture war we find ourselves on?

We should not leave 2 Thess. 2 without saying a few words about the pretrib

rapture interpretation of “taken out of the way.” We have dealt with the Greek on it above. The Antiochan historical precedent must be taken in context with it. When we put these two together, there is no pretrib rapture in view here, rather the picture of an endtime “Menelaus” rising from the midst of endtime apostasy. Arising from midst of the apostasy, the mystery of lawlessness.

Of course, the pretrib “until he be taken out of the way” is a very fond thing, however, it doesn’t affect the endtime scenario we have outlined. For Onias, the restrainer, foreshadowing Jesus, had to be “taken out of the way” first before Antiochus could get on with his program. Onias was the main obstacle. We believe “until one arise from the midst” is the correct Greek translation, however, either way, they both fit the historical paradigm.

We hasten to say that Antiochus only *thought* he had won, he only *thought* he had gotten rid of his opponents. He did not, nor will the antichrist eradicate faith. Onias lived on in the faithful. They that know their God are strong in their faith, and do exploits. Antiochus did not prevail, neither will the antichrist, Jesus said,

“Upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT,” Matt. 16:18

Back to the political. Seleucus III, the eldest son of Antiochus III is the one in Dan. 11:20 who sought to tax his domains to increase revenues. Antiochus IV Epiphanes was of that tradition. Such considerations causes us to expect the endtime antichrist to arise in the same sort of environment, the “tax and spend” socialist policies of the political left.

Due to President Bush’s forays in Iraq, some are thinking that the conservative right is the bad guys and the liberal left the good guys. We disagree (we’re not promoting Bush as a good representative of conservative principles.) We are warned against confusing good and evil, Isa. 5:20. As per the Antiochus paradigm, we see the antichrist arising in the tax and spend tradition of the liberal left...and the immoral (pro-abortion, pro-homosexual, pro-same sex marriage, etc.) antichristian tradition of the liberal left. Made to order for the man of SIN when he appears.

Note who are Bush’s opponents, the powerful worldwide anti-war “peace” movement. And how the left uses it to their advantage. The same device we see predicted of the antichrist. Dan.8:25 indicates it is a form of deception, *“by peace shall destroy many.”* We should not forget that the left has a long tradition of being

at the helm in most of our major wars.

It doesn't take much imagination to see someone seeing the political advantage of being able to solve the increasing problem of worldwide Islamic terrorism, to easily fall into the role we see predicted in these prophecies. Especially if he believes it will get him elected. We see him arising in the anti-war tradition of the hippy left, a man of "peace," switching sides once he gets in power, going forth to conquer Islam militarily. The political chameleon that he is. In doing so, practicing political one-upmanship, upstaging Bush, upstaging what Bush has started in the middle east region.

A key word we see in all this is INDIGNATION, see Dan. 8:19, 11:36. The term, "conservative," denotes belief in traditional values. True conservatives are downright indignant due to all traditional standards of morality, decency, and righteousness being cast down, and rightly so. Indignant of the broadside attack against religion in general, and Christian beliefs in particular. These things arouse indignation, or should! Meanwhile, the liberal left takes the exact opposite position. Such left-right polarization is NOT the bad thing the spin meisters of the media claim it is.

A key thing to look for: "*when the transgressors are come to the full,*" Dan. 8:23. Transgression implies lawlessness (2 Thess. 2:7). Antichrist shall "*think to change times and laws,*" Dan. 7:25. Conservatives, as traditionalists, are opposed to the evil changes going on everywhere. Laws being enacted that **encourage rather than deter sin**. No fault Divorce. Same sex marriage. Bacchanalian-like lawlessness (to get the full flavor of this, we refer you back to the section on Dionysus). God being openly spoken against, even blasphemed. Hollywood's openly blasphemous and antichrist movies, The Last Temptation of Christ, The Da Vinci Code. Witchcraft (Harry Potter, etc.) being openly promoted. The ACLU (Anti Christ Lawyers Union) being the chief instigators of anti-christian "change."

As per Dan.8:23, it is not until transgressors are come to the full that antichrist "stands up." Antiochus pressured the Jews to conform to his Hellenization, eventually the pressure became force. What we are now seeing will culminate in the person of antichrist himself. He is the epitome of it. We see the seeds of it now, but not the fullness of it. So far, it is only subversive pressure to conform, in the near future **force** will be used to make opponents conform. "It just can't get any worse," we hear, oh, yes, but it can!

As Antiochus' Hellenization aroused **indignation** and resistance, so today in our

increasingly apostate culture war. We say, let there be righteous indignation!

When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him, Isa. 59:19b.

THE WHITE HORSE RIDER OF THE FIRST SEAL

Certain events in the career of Antiochus shed light on a critical event in the book of Revelation. The first white horse rider of the first seal. Revelation 6

1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

Who is this white horse rider? Whoever he is, he is most critical, FOR THE ENDTIME BEGINS WITH HIM.

Books, and even songs, have been written about the “pale horse” of seal four. But not that much on the white horse. Some prophecy preachers teach that we are already way into the seals, some say seal six, and into the trumpets and vials. Well, if we are, **where is this king** (symbolized by his crown) who goes forth to conquer militarily (symbolized by the bow in his hand)? And what about the Lamb who opens this seal? What does the Lamb have to do with the opening of these seals? Plenty, as we shall see.

It becomes imperative for us to understand who this white horse rider is, as it will prevent us from falling for such preterist interpretations. All too common, the tendency is to interpret things as already happened when they HAVE NOT HAPPENED YET (preterist notions), such as the white horse rider. Plus, even more importantly, it gives us a point of prophecy to focus on. If this white horse rider kicks off the endtimes, it only makes sense that we make it our business to find out who, or what, this means.

We don't see just a white horse rider going forth to conquer, we see he is part of a prophetic unit, the famous “four horsemen of the Apocalypse.” Obviously, a composite picture of military conquest...the first horseman goes forth to conquer, with war, famine, and pestilence following in his wake.

This sequence is not without precedent. It occurs very often in the OT prophets as a judgmental sequence, and is most prominent, for instance: Jer. 24:10, 27:13,

44:13, Ezek. 6:11, 12:16. And with a conquering king preceding it, as in Jer. 27:8:

*And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar **the king of Babylon**, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the **sword**, and with the **famine**, and with the **pestilence**, until I have consumed them by his hand.*

Notice, the king of Babylon goes “forth to conquer” in military conquest, with sword, famine, and pestilence in its wake. This is what we have in Revelation. The same sequence. Thus, the interpretation of the four horsemen should not be something left to conjecture. Rev. 10:7 says the key to the prophetic imagery (mysteries) in Revelation – which would include the conquering king, war, famine, pestilence sequence – is to be found in the prophets:

*But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, **as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.***

As to the horse sequence, we see the basis for it in the prophet Zechariah, his was a horse and chariot sequence of red, black, white, and grizzled horses, Zech. 6:1-8. Revelation has “horses of a different color,” but the principle is the same.

Jesus, the greatest prophet of all, used the same sequence in Matt. 24:4-8, which he termed “the beginning of sorrows” (birthpains). He has deception and false Christs preceding the familiar sequence of the prophets.

In ancient history, conquering kings are usually pictured on white horses. As Jesus is in Rev. 19 at the second coming. The focus of the entire book of Revelation is Jesus, the king, riding forth to conquer in chapter 19. Thus the meaning of the white horse rider of the first seal. **Only two white horse riders in Rev. One starts the tribulation, the other concludes it.** The first one rides forth to conquer, so the second. The first one, however, is the false imitator of the second. The first white horse rider, the false king, the false Christ. The antichrist, in other words.

Matt. 24 follows the precedent laid down in Daniel. As King Antiochus, the precursory antichrist, went forth in deception and military conquest, so the endtime one. False Christ deception precedes the sword, famine, and pestilence sequence. The seals in Rev. follow Jesus’ sequence.

Revelation is polyvalent. That is, it conflates. In the book of Revelation we have the summarization of all prophecy that precedes it, it conflates all lines of prophecy. Not as Dispensationalists have it: OT lines of prophecy brought straight through unmodified into the book of Revelation. Not so, they are merged or conflated, and modified in accordance with progressive revelation. Thus, what we see in the first four seals is a conflation of these lines of prophecy:

1. The conquering king, sword, famine, pestilence sequence in the prophets
2. The four horse sequence of Zech. 6
3. King Antiochus in Daniel, the historical backdrop to the Olivet Discourse, who went forth in military conquest.
4. The false Christ deception, war, famine, pestilence sequence of Matt. 24:4-8
5. The historical tradition of royalty riding a white horse – as depicted in BOTH white horse riders of Revelation.
6. The scroll and its seals opened by the lamb, Rev. 5, 6.

What we see in summation, is the first white horse rider of the first seal as the antichrist riding forth in the spirit of false Christ deception with the sword of war, famine, and pestilence following in his wake.

It is Jesus the Lamb in Matt. 24:5, the greatest prophet of all, who adds the all important antichrist ingredient. It is Jesus, the Lamb, in the Olivet Discourse, that opens the seals. Rev. 6:1 says, *“And I saw, when the Lamb opened one of the seals...”*

In other words, Daniel’s prophecies provide the basic fabric that this story is sketched on, but without Jesus’ all important input, Daniel’s prophecies would have application only to Old Covenant lawlessness. This is, in fact, the way Dispensationalists interpret Daniel. Jesus, however, in the Olivet Discourse, places the Apostolic New Covenant Church (he addressed the discourse to the Apostles, the founders of the Church), not Old Covenant Judaism, as the focus of these prophecies. As He taught no such thing as a pretrib rapture in this discourse, He has the Apostolic Church, not Judaism, playing the central prophetic role in the endtime.

We have spoken much about Daniel, a truly great prophet, however, it is fitting we close this study with one that takes preeminence to Daniel: Jesus Christ. **Jesus “Christianized” Daniel**, he made Daniel’s prophecies relevant to the NT church by giving them Christian application.

Without Jesus, King Antiochus, the abomination of desolation and the great tribulation have a distinct historical and Old Covenant flavor to them – how Dispensationalists see it. However, Jesus made Daniel, and all prophecy that preceded him, relevant...while the rest of NT prophecy, including Revelation, follow HIS lead. Jesus the Lamb is the one we should look to, and no other, to open the first seal.

ANTIOCHAN TIME LINE

1. Antiochus III, Greek ruler of Syria and Palestine, was killed in 187 BC, his son, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, inherited the throne.
2. Antiochus Epiphanes continued his father's campaign of Hellenizing Jewish culture with vigor. Such things as the imposition of theaters and gymnasiums throughout his realm. Both of which, with their promotion of immoral values, featuring half naked and fully naked participants, were extremely offensive to devout Jews. Some 30 cities in Palestine had the status of "polis," the Greek ideal city, and had become Hellenized.
3. This pagan Hellenizing caused a major culture war and a split among the Jews. Jews who chose to live according to the laws of their forefathers vs apostate liberal Jews who adopted Hellenist culture, and who collaborated with King Antiochus. A classic conservative vs liberal polarization.
4. The Jewish high priests, up to this point, were successors of the line of Zadok since the time of David and Solomon. However, Antiochus appointed Menelaus, someone not of the line of Zadok. Menelaus had Onias, the rightful high priest of the line of Zadok, assassinated. Menelaus was in complete collaboration with Antiochus' subversive agenda.
5. Antiochus embarked on a series of military campaigns against Egypt, the "king of the south" of Dan. 11, in 169-168 BC.
6. During his second campaign, rumors that he had died reached Jerusalem which caused an uprising of devout Jews. He sent Apollinios with 22,000 soldiers. They slaughtered the devout Jews and pillaged Jerusalem. Then Antiochus appeared, very much alive.
7. He erected a statue of Zeus-Dionysus at the temple altar. He further desecrated the temple by sacrificing a pig on the altar. It was in an utter abomination to devout Jews, and brought a desolate or defiled condition to the Temple, now no one would come to worship at it. Thus, the abomination of desolation.
8. Shrines were built throughout Palestine to Zeus-Dionysus. Jews were forbidden to keep the religion of their forefathers upon pain of death,

particularly the observance of the Sabbath and circumcision – the identifying marks of the Old Covenant.

9. This caused a massive resistance by devout Jews, and massive persecution and martyrdom of them by Antiochus – in collaboration with the apostate Jews. A persecution that continued for 3 ½ years. It is said that he killed 80,000 Jews, imprisoned 40,000, and sold another 40,000 as slaves.
10. Amidst massive martyrdom, the faithful Jews continued their fight against pagan hellenization. Chief of which, were the Maccabees of the Hasmonean clan, a succession of freedom fighters who were strong and did great exploits, ultimately defeating the hellenizers militarily, delivering Israel from their oppressors.

In the following, we compare the historical events above with their prophetic projections:

Culture war and the falling away.

- a. **Historic.** The agenda to subvert the Biblical beliefs of the Jews by Hellenization. The backdrop to Antiochus' eventual persecution of the Jews. Which fomented a deep polarization among the people, conservative vs liberal, on both political and religious levels. Apostates vs the faithful. Sin vs righteousness.
- b. **Prophetic projection.** The present day agenda to subvert Biblical values and beliefs, in particular true Christian beliefs. The backdrop to the eventual persecutions of the great tribulation. Our present day culture war and the deep polarization of people along conservative and liberal lines, polarized both politically and religiously. Those who are part of the apostasy of 2 Thess. 2:3 (the "falling away") vs the faithful. Sin (ultimately to be manifested in its standard bearer, the man of SIN, 2 Thess. 2:3) vs righteousness and holiness.

The succession of truth

- a. **Historic.** Onias of the line of Zadok represented a succession back to the original beliefs of the Jews and the true monotheistic worship of God. To the faithful Jews, Menelaus, Antiochus' main instrument of Hellenistic subversion, was the very emblem of apostasy. This further polarized the people. Those who sided with Onias, on the one hand, and those who sided with Menelaus, on the other.
- b. **Prophetic projection.** The true line of succession back to original faith. In Christianity, the "line of Zadok" is the spiritual succession back to the doctrinal and holiness beliefs of the early Apostolic Church; Christianity's "Menelaus" is the

false line of succession claimed back to the Roman Catholic Trinitarian councils of the fourth century AD. Amongst Jews, the “line of Zadok” is present day strictly Biblical Jews (such as the Karaites); their “Menelaus” is the false line of succession claimed by the Talmudic-Kabbalistic Jews.

Original Christianity was not Roman Catholic; original Judaism was not Talmudic. In Christianity, the original and true monotheistic worship of God was not Trinitarian; In Judaism, the original and true monotheistic worship of God was not Kabbalistic.

The endtime Antiochan-like events at Jerusalem will be the means by which devout Biblical Jews will convert to Christ, to Christian monotheism, the Apostolic faith, and obey Acts 2:38.

Military conquest

- a. **Historic.** Antiochus made military campaigns into the Egypt, the kingdom of Ptolomy, called “the king of the south” in Daniel.
- b. **Prophetic projection.** The antichrist will do the same, he goes forth to conquer, this is where he gains notoriety, however, his military campaigns are in relation to the present day geo-political “king of the south, modern day Islam.

The counterfeit Messiah

- a. **Historic.** The devout Jews heard rumors (and believed them) that Antiochus had gotten killed, which prompted an uprising in Jerusalem. Their hopes were dashed, however, when he appeared (epiphany), a warrior returning from his military campaigns, and very much alive.. and able to wage war.
- b. **Prophetic projection.** Something similar takes place, the beast “...as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast,” Rev. 13:3, 4. A counterfeit satanic resurrection, probably used to convince the world that his phony resurrection, and not Jesus', is the one the world should believe in. This, in immediate connection with his return from his military campaign, will be used to prove that he is the true Messiah. According to Jewish prophetic interpretation, Messiah is supposed to be invincible in military power. “And they worshipped they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is able to make war with him.”

The Abomination of Desolation

a. **Historic.** Here is where Antiochus revealed his true intentions, his true nature. In collaboration with his high priest, he determined to rid the world of those who resisted his Hellenist agenda once and for all. He was despicable to the devout, and he despised them and their "fundamentalist" devout beliefs. In response to them and their beliefs, he erected a statue of Zeus-Dionysus (a mystic representation of Antiochus himself), an altar for pagan worship in the temple, and sacrificed a pig on the altar. Which events, to devout Jews, amounted to the ultimate blasphemy, an abomination and a desolation of the temple.

b. **Prophetic projection.** The counterfeit resurrection of the beast as the counterfeit Messiah will occasion the blasphemies of the beast, Rev. 13:5, 6, and the worship of himself in an image of himself, the image of the beast, Rev. 13:14, 15. Which is the open revelation of the man of sin sitting "in the temple of God shewing himself that he is God," 2 Thess. 2:4. The image of the beast standing in the Jerusalem temple "holy place," Matt. 24:15. All of which is done in collaboration with the 2nd beast, who is the false prophet, the endtime high priest, the 1st beast's PR man. All of which is done to rid the world of the beast's opponents, to rid the world of true faith in Christ...at Jerusalem and throughout the world.

Great Tribulation, martyrdom and persecution

a. **Historic.** Antiochus ordered shrines to be built throughout Palestine to pagan gods, forcing Jews to comply or die. Jews were forbidden to keep the Old Covenant upon pain of death, particularly the observance of circumcision and the Sabbath - the identifying marks of the Old Covenant. Great persecution of devout Jews continued for 3 ½ years. Many died, yet Antiochus' persecutions did not exterminate them. Though heavily persecuted, devout Jews persevered.

b. **Prophetic projection.** The abomination of desolation marks the beginning point of the great tribulation, Matt. 24:15-21. Which continues for 3 ½ years, Rev. 13:5.

The image of the beast is replicated throughout the world, and worship of it, Rev. 13:14,15. The mark of the beast is imposed upon the world, a mark identifying the apostates, Rev. 13:16-18. This in contradistinction to the identifying mark of the faithful, cp Rev. 13:16-18, 14:1. Both are marks of servitude: a common practice was for slaves to be branded in their foreheads.

The beast seeks to rid the world of New Covenant belief. The New Covenant is the

only valid covenant...both now and in the endtime. Water and spirit baptism are it's identifying marks (or signs), they equate to the circumcision and Sabbath of the Old Covenant, Acts 2:38, Col. 2:11,12, cp Isa. 28:11-18 to 1 Cor. 14:21, 22.

Many will be persecuted, many will become martyrs, but the faithful will persevere. *"But the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits,"* Dan. 11:32b. In the midst of it all will be the greatest revival of all time, MANY will be instructed in the truth and be converted, Dan. 11:33, 12:10, Rev. 7:9,14.

Deliverance

- a. **Historic.** The Hasmonean family wrought deliverance. Chief among them: Judah Maccabee, and King Alexander Yanni.
- b. **Prophetic projection.** Equivalent to the faithful Hasmonean family is the true church, persevering in their faith, persecuted by antichrist, yet some survive, as did the Hasmoneans. As the Hasmoneans were delivered by one of their own, so the church: Jesus Christ! Who defeats militarily the beast and his armies and the false prophet at Armageddon. Bringing deliverance to the persecuted (as did Judah Maccabee). Bringing in (via the resurrection) the millennial kingdom - prefigured by the Hasmonean king, Alexander Yanni.

"What precedes what" is very important:

Historic. The culture war between devout and apostate Jews preceded Antiochus' military campaigns and his subsequent "revelation" in the Jerusalem temple.

Endtime prophecy. Paul's "falling away" (apostasy), our present day culture war, must precede the revelation of the man of sin in the temple of God, 2 Thess. 2:3,4.

[Paul's usage of "temple of God," we understand, simply defines the place where the historical precedent took place, and where the prophetic event will take place. Since Jews are the main players in this, Paul uses their term. Which they use to differentiate the temple at Jerusalem from all other temples in the world.]

Historic. Antiochus' military conquests precedes his "revelation" and abomination of desolation.

Endtime prophecy. The beast's military conquest (whom shall make war with the beast) precedes his apparent resurrection and messianic revelation, and the

imposition of the image of the beast. His apparent resurrection is an event with clear messianic implications. Hence a progression of first, military conquest, then, an apparent resurrection, then, messianic “revelation,” then, the abomination of desolation.

Historic. Antiochus’ military conquests preceded the abomination of desolation and period of great persecution.

Endtime prophecy. The antichrist’s military conquests, the beginning of sorrows of Matt. 24, the first four seals of Revelation, precede the martyrdom of the fifth seal (inclusive of the abomination of desolation and the great tribulation).

[Take note that the culture war and military conquest are before the messianic revelation. It denotes the antichrist will not be “revealed” openly as messiah during his military campaigns. The elect should recognize him even in the military conquest phase of his career.]

Historic. Antiochus’ abomination of desolation was the event that marked the beginning of his 3 ½ year period of great persecution.

Endtime prophecy. According to Jesus, the abomination of desolation marks the beginning of the great tribulation, Matt. 24:15-21. Which we know from many passages in Revelation is a period of 3 ½ years.

Historic. The deliverance wrought by the Maccabees closed out Antiochus’ persecutions.

Endtime prophecy. The second coming of Jesus Christ, a great deliverance! closes out the great tribulation.

Historic. The Hasomean kingdom was brought in by the Maccabees after Antiochus’ persecutions.

Endtime prophecy. The millennial kingdom will be brought in by Jesus Christ

after the great tribulation.

Thus, based on Daniel, we deduce a general time line of prophetic events: apostasy, military conquest, messianic revelation, abomination of desolation, great tribulation, second coming, and the millennial.

We deduce the same in Matt. 24: the beginning of sorrows, abomination of desolation, great tribulation, the second coming.

And the same in the imagery of the book of Revelation: the first four seals (apostasy and military conquest), the fifth seal (the great tribulation, inclusive of the abomination of desolation), the sixth seal (astronomical calamities that close out the tribulation), the seventh seal (which has to be the second coming itself).

This is most critical, with so many prophetic “winds of doctrine” blowing, this charts for us a clear course ahead. It keeps us from being “*tossed to and fro, carried about by every wind of doctrine,*” Eph. 4:14.

It tells us precisely where we are. We are in the apostasy/culture war phase (obviously, very far along in it), with the stage being set for the man of the apostasy to make his appearance. Appearing first in his preliminary “riding forth” in military conquest – which will be recognized only by the elect, in this phase, the world will not recognize him as such. This occurs before his apparent resurrection and outward revelation as the Jewish Messiah, and before the abomination of desolation which starts the great tribulation.

As with the historical Antiochus, the geo-political center was Palestine, so, the prophetic projection. This has direct implications to the present day Islamic conflict, and the Temple Mount Faithful movement in Israel, a group hoping to capitalize on middle east conflict in order to get the Jerusalem temple rebuilt. These considerations, plus the ongoing culture war and conservative vs liberal polarization, tell us that the stage is indeed being set.

As we write this, the stock market and general economic conditions are at their max. One thing this writer keeps an eye on is economics. If history is any guide, which I believe it is, we will see the antichrist arise in the exact opposite conditions we see now. As Hitler and all other despots did in times of deep economic depression, I expect the same. Hence, the current hoopla about President Bush is premature in my estimation.

Yogi Berra, famous for his witticisms ("its deja vu all over again," "when you come to a fork in the road take it"), said "you can observe a lot just by watching." Jesus said: *"And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch,"* Mark 13:37.

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